



Older persons and persons with disabilities need priority access to food shopping

To:

Régis Degelcke,
President of Eurocommerce
Avenue des Nerviens 85, 3rd floor
B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Mr Degelcke,

When confinement measures were introduced to combat COVID19, we welcomed the various initiatives taken by supermarket chains and food retailers offering priority access and delivery to persons with disabilities and older people. We understand that these initiatives come at an extra cost to retailers and are very thankful to those who took such actions. We would like however to stress the importance of scaling up these essential measures now that confinement measures are progressively being lifted.

The general inaccessibility of public and private spaces means that some people, such as persons with disabilities and older persons are highly at risk when leaving their home as they may need support from other people or to physically touch more surfaces (for example wheelchair wheels, blind persons may need to use physical touch to assist them, etc).

It is thus of utmost importance that priority access and home delivery become a widespread practice among food retailers.

We therefore call on Eurocommerce to raise awareness of this situation to their members and to strongly recommend them to put in place the following measures to support older people and persons with disabilities:

- Online platforms of supermarkets and food retailers must be accessible to persons with disabilities and raise awareness of all measures taken to meet their shopping needs.
- Allow them to choose to be accompanied when shopping, even when rules state that persons should shop alone.
- Give entry priority and ensure they have priority at the dedicated cashier.

- Create reserved opening hours preferably in the first hour of opening, at least twice a week.
- Arrange accessible, convenient and personalised pick up methods.
- Create a system for priority online home delivery. Example: an online code distributed through governmental authorities or organisations which would allow them to book a delivery time within 48h.

We thank you in advance for considering our proposals and remain at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,



Yannis Vardakastanis
President, European Disability Forum



Anne-Sophie Parent
Secretary General, AGE Platform Europe